

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5     1.    In a database management system, a method for  
viewing changes to an original optimization plan for a  
query having a reference to an original table with data  
stored in a database, the method comprising:  
      copying the original table excluding the data to  
10    define a virtual table;  
      providing a virtual index associated with the  
virtual table;  
      replacing, in the query, the reference to the  
original table with a reference to the virtual table;  
15    adding, to the query, a reference to the virtual  
index;  
      determining a new optimization plan for the query;  
and  
20    2.    The method of claim 1 further comprising comparing  
the new optimization plan with the original optimization  
plan.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising, before comparing the new and the original optimization plans:

replacing, in the new optimization plan, the reference to the virtual table with the reference to the original table; and

displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan with the reference to the original table.

4. In a database management system, a method for viewing changes to an original optimization plan for a query having: (i) a reference to an original table with data stored in a database, and (ii) a reference to an original index associated with the original table, the method comprising:

copying the original table excluding the data to define a virtual table;

changing the original index to define a virtual index associated with the virtual table;

determining a new optimization plan for the query;

and

5     6. The method of claim 5 further comprising, before  
comparing the new and the original optimization plans:

displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan with the references to the original table and the original index.

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        copying the original table excluding the data to
define a virtual table;

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replacing, in the query, the reference to the original table with a reference to the virtual table;

deleting, from the query, the reference to the virtual table;

5       determining a new optimization plan for the query;  
and

8.     The method of claim 7 further comprising comparing  
the new optimization plan with the original optimization  
10    plan.

9.     The method of claim 8 further comprising, before  
comparing the new and the original optimization plans:  
replacing, in the new optimization plan, the  
15    reference to the virtual table with the reference to the  
original table; and

displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan  
with the reference to the original table.